

VZCZCXRO9037
PP RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHAK #1956/01 3171544
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 121544Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7966
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASH DC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAHLA/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 001956

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR G/TIP, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE, USAID

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/12/2018

TAGS: [TIP](#) [SMIG](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [KFRD](#) [ASEC](#) [ELAB](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: COMBATING TIP IN TURKEY: UNEVEN PROGRESS TOWARD
SUSTAINABILITY

REF: A. ANKARA 610

[B](#). SECSTATE 119763

Classified By: Acting POL Counselor Chris Krafft, reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Turkey is facing a number of deadlines in 2009 in achieving long-term and sustainable support for core aspects of its anti-trafficking program: the TIP shelters and the "157" hotline. Our EU, NGO and GOT contacts remain confident that Turkey will do so, but the effort has taken a step backwards with the Istanbul municipality's notice that it will no longer provide free rent to the NGO-run trafficking shelter, despite a protocol between the city and the NGO operating the shelter. To demonstrate a tangible and concrete GOT role, MFA has pledged \$120,000 over three years to the Ankara and Istanbul shelters, but that amount only constitutes a fraction of the shelters' annual operating budgets, and other agencies have not yet come forward with their own contributions. On the other hand, the GOT has earmarked funding for nine positions in the Turkish National Police (TNP) to operate the hotline. Interviews will begin soon and the TNP should be ready to assume responsibility for operating the hotline by the time the EU funding of IOM's hotline operation ends in late 2009. Police officers were apprehended in a number of recent anti-trafficking raids. According to TNP, these officers are imprisoned awaiting trial. Regional cooperation continues to strengthen as Ankara prepares to host a regional NGO anti-trafficking conference and Istanbul a regional conference on mutual legal assistance. END SUMMARY.

A STEP BACK ON SHELTERS

[1](#)2. (SBU) The Istanbul municipality has informed the Human Resources Development Foundation (HRDF), the NGO operating the Istanbul TIP shelter, that it no longer will provide free rent, despite the protocol signed between HRDF and the municipality in 2004 (at a ceremony witnessed by then-FM Gul and Secretary Powell). According to HRDF President Turgut Tokus, the city alleges that it is no longer authorized to do so as a result of an audit. The Istanbul shelter has assisted 54 trafficking victims so far this year. HRDF has, for the time being, assumed rental costs, but the issue has created uncertainty for the shelter's future, much like the Ankara shelter faced last year (reftel). (NOTE: There is no indication the Ankara municipality will cease to provide the Ankara shelter facility and related utilities free of charge. END NOTE.)

[1](#)3. (SBU) EU funds have been supporting personnel and other operating expenses at both shelters under the two-year 3 million euro TIP project (ref A), but these funds do not include rent and are premised on an understanding that the GOT would assume responsibility for funding the shelters upon

the project's completion, in 2009. European Commission funds are available for the Ankara shelter through May 2009, and for the Istanbul shelter through September 2009. According to EC Sector Managers Burce Ari and Aycan Akdeniz, from the EU perspective, a GOT failure to assume and/or guarantee long-term funding for the shelters would constitute failure of the EU project; there would be no EC follow-up on TIP. Ari and Akdeniz hope the GOT will not allow it to come to that. The EU does not usually make direct allocations to sustain government services, but the EC had been persuaded that Turkey was prepared to assume control after an interim period, as promised in the National Action Plan (NAP). But the NAP has languished in the Ministry of Interior (MOI) unreleased for nearly a year, despite interagency approval, and none of our contacts can quite explain why.

14. (SBU) Tokus, along with our EC and IOM contacts, tell us that GOT TIP Taskforce Chairman Ambassador Kemal Gur has prioritized reaching a solution on the shelters. MFA recently pledged \$120,000 over three years for the two shelters, though that is only about ten percent of the annual operating costs, excluding rent. These are GOT funds, and a promising start, but other agencies -- namely the MOI, which is the parent agency of TNP and Jandarma -- have not yet matched the MFA pledge. TNP Foreigners' Department Chief Mehmet Terzioğlu told us that influential former Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu (now ruling Justice and Development Party Vice Chairman) has promised to intervene with the municipality. The GOT and HRDF are also planning to lobby the Turkish Red Crescent (Kizilay) to support trafficking shelters in Turkey. Terzioğlu lamented that the Taskforce is engaged once again in finding solutions for the existing

ANKARA 00001956 002 OF 003

shelters when the GOT is in fact focused on expanding facilities for protecting victims and potential victims, focusing first on Antalya. That effort continues; HRDF, IOM and GOT officials traveled recently to Antalya to meet with the governor, mayor and other local officials. HRDF has volunteered to train a local NGO there to administer a "comfort and protection" facility for potential victims awaiting screening. No formal contract has yet been reached with the city. COMMENT: Our contacts are optimistic about resolving this problem, and the Taskforce is demonstrating considerable creative effort, but proposed solutions remain ad hoc; the Taskforce's will has not yet been matched at the GOT's most senior levels. END COMMENT.

FIRMER GROUND ON THE HOTLINE

15. (SBU) Unlike for the shelters, funding for nine additional positions at TNP to operate the hotline has been appropriated in the TNP budget. The TNP must conduct examinations and interviews and should be prepared to begin operation in the second half of 2009. EC funding to IOM for the hotline is available through November 2009. As already reported, TNP and IOM are in discussions on how to ensure an effective handover of the hotline, which the GOT and IOM see as a regional best practice. IOM and TNP have created a technical working group that will meet in December to discuss the transition. Terzioğlu did not rule out to us hiring IOM hotline staff, but contracting rules, he said, require that new hires be subject to TNP examination and interviews.

POLICE OFFICERS CAUGHT IN ANTI-TRAFFICKING RAIDS

16. (SBU) Terzioğlu confirmed media reports that anti-trafficking operations in the Istanbul and Mugla regions ensnared upwards of 14 police officers. He did not confirm media allegations that a retired police chief, as well as a judge, a prosecutor and other judicial personnel were involved. The cases are now with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), and Turkish custom does not permit a government official to discuss an ongoing case. Terzioğlu said he would try to provide us basic information on the number of police officers and other GOT officials arrested and the status of

their cases. The suspects are in prison awaiting trial. In addition to any criminal penalties, the suspects will be expelled when their cases are concluded -- a process that can take two-three years (for an Article 80 prosecution). The TNP is determined to root out any police involvement in trafficking, said Terzioglu. COMMENT: We will press MOJ and other GOT contacts for any information concerning efforts to prosecute official involvement in TIP. END COMMENT.

TURKEY TIP ACTION GUIDE: REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT CONTINUES;
STRIVING TO ENSURE ALL VICTIMS IDENTIFIED

17. (SBU) We discussed the Action Guide for Turkey to Combat TIP (ref B) and explained the areas of specific concern noted in the TIP Report during our most recent outreach to GOT, IOM, EC and NGO contacts. Post will translate the Action Guide and provide our contacts copies in original and Turkish. Regarding cooperation with source countries, MFA Acting Department Head for Consular Affairs and Migration Nilufer Kaygisiz noted that the Prime Ministry General Directorate on Women will host a regional NGO conference on TIP November 19 in Ankara, while Istanbul will play host to a regional mutual legal assistance conference November 27-28.

18. (C) On victim identification, Terzioglu underscored that Turkey has a sophisticated screening and referral mechanism, that includes NGOs and IOM. Likewise, law enforcement continues to receive extensive training on victim identification and protection. He is aware of statistical disparities between source and destination country and IOM reporting, but the definition of a victim in Turkish Penal Code Article 80 is close to the Palermo Convention. Nonetheless, to help ensure a more common regional understanding of who is a victim, Turkey is considering signing and ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on TIP, even as he implied that source countries may have an interest in boosting the number of victims to take advantage of the compensation mechanism. Definitions aside, strong bilateral cooperation is essential, and Terzioglu noted the importance of correspondence between source and destination country authorities being done in English. On Armenia, he underlined that there is no less interest in Turkey for the welfare of Armenian victims than for other victims. But he believes the problem cannot be as great as others suggest.

ANKARA 00001956 003 OF 003

According to Terzioglu, despite 30,000 Armenian visitors per year, the annual difference between entries and exits is only about 150, far fewer than that of other countries in the region. Turkish police talk to Armenian colleagues at regional conferences, but, in his view, the lack of diplomatic relations -- an issue far outside the purview of TNP or other officials responsible for combating TIP -- inevitably hinders communication. The TNP, he said, stands ready to cooperate with Armenia on TIP, suggesting such interaction could be facilitated by IOM or an NGO.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
[http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:Turk ey](http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:Turk%20ey)

WILSON